TERMS OF REFERENCE

Expert Reference Group to review and finalise
International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS)

[Last reviewed December 2014]

1 Summary

The United Nations Coordinating Action on Small Arms (CASA) has created an Expert Reference Group (ERG) to review and provide feedback on draft International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) that are being developed by CASA in cooperation with partners worldwide. The ERG comprises experts on small arms and light weapons (SALW) control and related areas from the United Nations; governments; international, regional and sub-regional organizations; civil society and the private sector.

This document provides terms of reference regarding the purpose and functioning of the ERG, as well as the responsibilities of experts who accept to serve on it.

2 Background

CASA strives to improve the UN’s ability to work as one in delivering effective policy, programming and advice to Member States on curbing the uncontrolled proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons (SALW). Secretary-General Kofi Annan created CASA in 1998 with the task of coordinating the small arms work of numerous UN departments, programmes, funds, offices, institutes and committees. CASA unites 23 UN entities active in policy development and/or programming related to SALW control.

At the 3rd Biennial Meeting of States in July 2008, CASA launched an initiative to develop a set of International Small Arms Control Standards (ISACS) along the lines of the standards already developed by the United Nations in the areas of mine action and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants. The purpose of the ISACS initiative is to develop a set of
internationally accepted and validated standards that provide clear and comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers on fundamental aspects of SALW control.

ISACS will be framed by existing global agreements on SALW control and will build upon the results of regional and sub-regional initiatives to develop standards, best practice guidelines, codes of conduct, model regulations and standard operating procedures in this area.

CASA has created a Working Group on ISACS – co-chaired by UNODA and UNDP and comprising interested CASA partners – to drive and oversee the development of the standards. UNDP and UNODA have jointly appointed a coordinator to manage the project.

3 Working Outline of ISACS

Following consultations with a range of relevant actors, CASA identified for development 6 series of standards, divided into 24 individual modules (see www.smallarmsstandards.org/isacs).

CASA has appointed a number of consultants, each a recognized expert in their respective areas, to produce first drafts of the ISACS modules.

4 Role of the Expert Reference Group (ERG)

In close collaboration with the ISACS consultants and in coordination with the ISACS Project Coordinator, members of the ERG will review and provide comprehensive and timely feedback on draft ISACS modules.

The consultants will use feedback from the ERG to revise their draft modules, which will subsequently be subject to further regional and virtual consultations with a wider audience. As such, the ERG has two principal roles:

a) Providing Overall Quality Control: The ERG serves as a crucial quality control checkpoint through which all draft ISACS modules must pass before being returned to Consultants for revision and ultimately released to a wider audience for further discussion.

Such quality control will primarily take the form of ensuring that ISACS modules are comprehensive in scope, reflect the best knowledge and understanding of the issues being addressed, and strike the right balance between effectiveness and achievability by all UN Member States.

In addition, the ERG should assist the ISACS Project Coordinator in the more technical task of ensuring consistency across all ISACS modules when it comes to structure, language, cross-referencing, etc.

b) Ensuring integration of crosscutting issues: The ERG ensures that important crosscutting issues are integrated as appropriate into all relevant ISACS modules. Such issues include considerations related to: gender, children, youth, human rights, victim assistance, crime, development, and civil society.
5 Responsibilities of Members of the Expert Reference Group

Specifically, members of the Expert Reference Group will perform the following functions:

a) Familiarize themselves with the ISACS project by consulting the following resources:
   i) The ISACS shared online workspace – [https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com](https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com) (members of the ERG will choose an individual username and password to access this site);
   ii) The ISACS website – [www.smallarmsstandards.org](http://www.smallarmsstandards.org); and
   iii) The ISACS Project Coordinator for any unanswered questions (patrick.mccarthy@smallarmsstandards.org).

b) Familiarize themselves thoroughly with international standards – their purpose, structure and language – by consulting the following resources, all of which are available under the “Files” tab of the shared online workspace - [https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com](https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com):
   i) Rules for the structure and drafting of International Standards
   ii) Template for International Standards
   iii) Model document of a draft International Standard

Important Note: It is indispensable that members of the ERG complete points a) and b) above before proceeding to providing feedback on draft ISACS modules.

c) In coordination with the ISACS Project Coordinator and in close collaboration with the ISACS consultants, members of the ERG will review and provide feedback on draft ISACS modules, taking into account the following:
   i) The ERG Member as ‘Focal Point’: Members of the ERG are encouraged to share draft ISACS modules under their review with other experts in their organizations and networks, on the understanding that draft ISACS modules should not be circulated further than is absolutely necessary for review purposes. Any additional feedback from such sources should be compiled and consolidated by ERG Members before being submitted to the ISACS project.
   ii) Number of Modules Reviewed: Members of the ERG are encouraged to review those modules on which they have particular technical or policy expertise. There is no upper or lower limit to the number of modules that a single member of the ERG may review.
   iii) Respect for Deadlines: Members of the ERG will be expected to respect deadlines, established by the ISACS Project Coordinator, for reviewing draft ISACS modules. The ISACS project cannot guarantee that feedback received after the deadline will be taken into account by consultants when revising their modules.
   iv) Feedback methods: Members of the ERG are encouraged to make full use of the online ISACS collaborative workspace - [https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com](https://un-casa-isacs.basecamphq.com) - when providing feedback. In cases where an ERG Member provides feedback to a consultant outside of this platform, a copy of the feedback in question shall in all cases be sent to the ISACS Project Coordinator.
   v) Nature of Feedback: ERG Members should understand that, while the feedback they provide will be taken into consideration (along with all other feedback received), it may not
be possible to incorporate all feedback received into a given ISACS module, e.g. when contradictory feedback is received from different ERG members, where feedback received goes against existing UN agreements, etc.). To the extent possible, reasons will be provided when particular pieces of feedback are not incorporated into a given ISACS module during the review process.

vi) **Civility and Respect:** During all stages of the review process, members of the ERG shall engage with one another and with the ISACS project staff in a civil and respectful manner. ERG members shall not use the ISACS online workspace to for the purpose of personal communication.

6 **Fees and remuneration**

Service on the Expert Reference Group is on a voluntary basis and does not involve payment in return for modules reviewed.

7 **Required skills and experience**

Members of the Expert Reference Group should broadly fit the following profile:

a) Work for an organization (UN, international, regional or sub-regional, government agency, civil society or industry/private sector) with demonstrable experience and expertise on SALW or a related area;

b) Have worked for at least 7 years on SALW or related issues in one or (preferably) more of the following areas:
   i) Design and management of SALW control programmes;
   ii) Operational support of SALW control programmes;
   iii) National legislation and regulations relating to SALW control;
   iv) Small arms industry;
   v) Crosscutting areas, especially gender, children, youth, human rights, victim assistance, crime, development and civil society.

c) Have experience with developing, maintaining or implementing regional, sub-regional or international standards/guidelines – or can comply in a timely manner with point 5(b) above.

d) Be capable of providing high quality, substantive feedback in English on draft ISACS modules in English;

e) Be a good team player and communicator (especially in electronic media) capable of providing insightful, constructive criticism.